CLAY GEERDES'

COMIX WORLD 162. January 1, 1981. © CLAY GEERDES, BOX 7081, BERKELEY, CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. $10 for 48 issues. Logo: Gary Hallgren. Her name is Mustang Sally and you can read two pages about her in color in each issue of SWANK this year. The feature, writes Hallgren, will depict "the antics of the stable of girls at Rancho Mustango, a legal bordello in Nevada. The heavy is the sheriff who has the whore house under his jurisdiction." Gary just completed a series of gum cards for TOPPS, entitled WEIRD WHEELS.

NEW FROM COMIX WORLD

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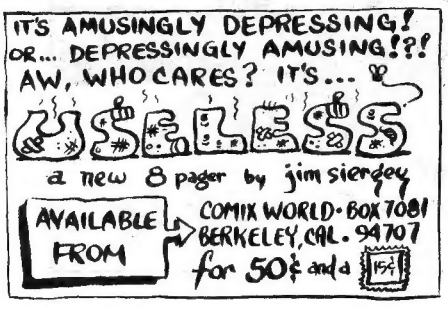

"I was a guest at PRATO III Italian convention last Feb along with Will Eisner, Howie Chaykin & Gray Morrow; Joe Parente, Pete Maresca & Phil Seuling brought displays and films. The artists had 20 pieces each mounted by a gallery in Prato, each artist in his own room. It was the most beautiful, Professional, well-lighted display of comic art work I had ever seen. Joe Parente's Golden Age originals were at a separate gallery, a high-tech masterpiece of modern Italian design which had been built around a 15th Century well which was still intact in the basement gallery. The contrast was telling, especially to put Golden Age comics up by the well and light them with modular stainless steel lamps.

"As the only representative of American ugs, I had to fall back on my "historical" role as a member of Air Pirates, which was just ducky with the Italians. They were all hungry for news of the Disney wars, taking it all much more seriously than the Americans. Thank God, at last a hero.

The convention did indeed treat us all like heroes with lavish hospitality and few demands. I gained ten pounds in ten days and Seuling would have gained 20 but unfortunately he was ill or he would have had to pay his excess baggage on return. We all had t-v interviews, printerviews, bookerviews, drew endless sketches and hung out in Florence museums and shops as much as possible. Local fandom would have had us up 24 hours yakkin' and sketchin'. Swell folks. . . They had mounted still another display of original art (in its own separate gallery in Prato) by all the best young Italian "amateur" comic artists. This display was sobering. Young Americans had better get down and get busy. These guys were good!" -GARY HALLGREN Sept. 10, 1980.

Dan O'Neill showing up in the San Francisco CHRONICLE lately. A strip entitled simply "O'Neill" in Sunday, 12-28-80.

It's rumored that PENNY-ANTE REPUBLICAN will return.

Harlan Ellison was coming to Berkeley and the groupies began lining up outside THE OTHER CHANGE OF HOBBIT nearly an hour early. It was December 13, 1980. A bit smoggy, but a nice day. Hundreds of Christmas shoppers cluttering up Telegraph Avenue. Lots of street musicians smiling, their guitar cases laden with bills and change. Ellison was a few minutes late, but none of the faithful had stirred. They knew they could count on him for their hit, knew that he would have smiles and insults to go around. Insult was his thing long before punk made it chic. Onstage for nearly two hours at Space Con a couple of years ago, Ellison made mincemeat of the trekkies and their slavish adoration of what was, in his estimation, boring space opera. At the Hobbit, Ellison signed endless copies of his latest anthology, SHATTERDAY, along with several million paperbacks and magazines. At times, he took a break to stand up and stomp on a STAR TREK novelization, light up his pipe (which tasted better when he was informed of Berkeley's no smoking in bookstores law), chat with old friends like Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, and share feelings about issues like capital punishment and television-writing. Asked about the I, ROBOT project, he said, "How do I know what Warner Brothers is doing? It's sitting there. Everytime they think about 31 million dollars, there's an outbreak of muscle-twitching." The fans went around and around. Many went through the line several times, each time with another four or five books. Ellison's left-handed scrawl became less and less legible as the time passed. He drank perrier and lemon, accepted compliments, shook a lot of hands, smiled at this, insulted that--"Don't sell them that book (a paperback he disliked). I always hated that book." He praised the fans who bought his new hardback and put down those who brought in their old paperback copies of DANGEROUS VISIONS and DEATHBIRD STORIES. It was all in fun. He seemed in a good mood and pleased that so many people turned out for his autograph party. -CLAY GEERDES

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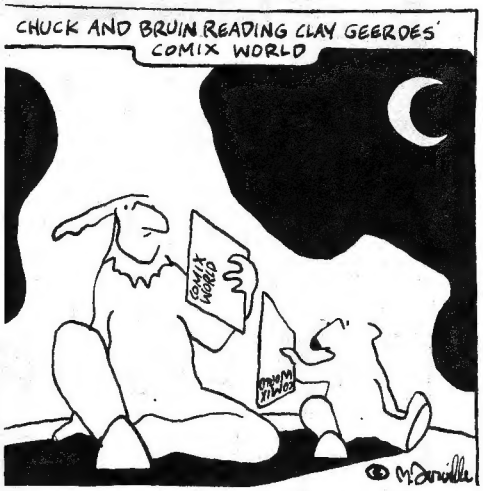

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COMIX IN JAPAN

"There are no underground comix as we know them, because 1) Japanese comix deal with a broad base of themes and sell regularly to all ages. Those aimed at a specifically older audience have condom jokes, plenty of nudity and sex--but no pubic hair. Drives you crazy. Large bookstores carry U.S. PLAYBOY, but the centerfold always has these disappointing scratches. They have people at the post office who do nothing but scratch snatch. 2) The Japanese are tougher, mucho, on drugs than the U.S.--cf. Paul McCartney's bust. There is some grass growing around, of course, but it's much more secretive. Since the Japanese only had a copycat student movement, there's really no counterculture for such things to come out of. 3) The Japanese are collective, whereas, we are individualistic. Tokyo is a very fashion-conscious city, perhaps more so than Paris. Non-conformity is not admired. Magazines do not run to satire. Comics are sold to all ages."

-Brad Walker. Oct. 26, 1980.